

STATE OF VERMONT BOARD OF MEDICAL PRACTICE

In re: Stephanie H. Taylor, M.D.)
a/k/a Stephanie Taylor Tasi, M.D.)
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Docket No. MPS 45-0304
MPS 48-0304

STATE'S MOTION TO EXTEND SUMMARY SUSPENSION PURSUANT TO INTERIM CONSENT ORDER

NOW COMES, the State of Vermont, by and through Attorney General William H. Sorrell and the undersigned Assistant Attorney General, James S. Arisman, and moves the Vermont Board of Medical Practice to grant this motion for the following reasons and for such other reasons as may be presented later.

1. Stephanie H. Taylor, M.D., a/k/a Stephanie Taylor Tasi, M.D., Respondent holds medical license No. 042-0008406, first issued by the Vermont Board of Medical Practice on September 9, 1991.

2. Until July 24, 1995, Respondent practiced as a psychiatrist and maintained an office in Stowe.

3. Respondent's involvement with the Vermont Board of Medical Practice began in July 24, 1995, when Respondent's Vermont medical license was summarily suspended by the Vermont Board of Medical Practice by emergency order, following suspension of her privileges by Copley Hospital and the hospital's determination that her continued involvement in the practice of medicine endangered the health and safety of her patients.

4. Subsequently, the Vermont Board in November 7, 1996 indefinitely suspended Respondent's medical license with her consent. Respondent admitted at that time to unprofessional conduct that included: (a) "chemical addiction"; (b) "mental impairment"; and (c) serious boundary violations with patients. The November 7, 1996 Stipulation and Consent Order stated that complaints to the Board regarding Respondent had alleged "egregious professional boundary violations, including an incident of sexual misconduct with a patient, and the misprescribing or dispensing of controlled substances."

5. Between July 24, 1995 and May 21, 2003 Respondent's Vermont medical license was suspended and/or "lapsed". Respondent had failed to renew her medical license in November 1996. Respondent's Vermont medical license was not reinstated by the Board until May 21, 2003.

Respondent's Medical Retraining

6. The Vermont Board on June 7, 2000 approved an agreement (hereinafter referred to as the June 7, 2000 consent order) amending the prior terms of the November 7, 1996 Stipulation and Consent Order to permit Respondent to retrain in the family practice residency at the Tufts University school of medicine. The June 7, 2000 consent order included the following conditions: (a) any practice of medicine by Respondent during her residency would be restricted solely to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; (b) Respondent would be prohibited from practicing medicine anywhere in Massachusetts if the practice was not "directly related to her Tufts residency"; and (c) Respondent would be prohibited from any practice of medicine in the State of Vermont in the future until the Vermont Board had provided express written approval for her to do so.

7. Respondent began the family practice residency at the Tufts University School of Medicine in the summer of 2000. She completed the Tufts residency in the Spring of 2003.

New Complaints

8. The Vermont Board opened two new complaints against Respondent in March and April 2004. Docket No. MPS 45-0304 alleged that Respondent had provided substandard care, violated patient confidentiality, and disregarded professional boundaries. MPS 48-0304 alleged that Respondent's medical license in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts had been suspended on February 18, 2004 for non-compliance with the terms of probation that had been imposed upon Respondent by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine.¹ Staff of the Vermont Board and the undersigned reviewed the allegations and investigated these matters. Interviews were conducted in Massachusetts and Vermont with practitioners and patients. Documentation and evidence was gathered from hospitals, private practitioners, pharmacies in Massachusetts and Vermont, and the Massachusetts Board.

9. Following the Board's initial investigation of the above-captioned complaints, the State negotiated an agreement with Respondent under which her Vermont medical license was summarily suspended (Paragraph 14 of the June 2004 agreement), pending further proceedings or order of the Board. Respondent agreed that Board investigation was appropriate. She also acknowledged that she had been informed that the State of Vermont

1. Based on the suspension of Respondent's medical license by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Medicine, the State of Vermont filed a Motion for Interim Suspension of Respondent's Vermont medical license. The State's motion was denied by the Vermont Board on May 5, 2004.

would file a specification of charges against her at a later date. Respondent acknowledged that no promises had been made to her regarding final disposition of the matters under investigation.

Specification of Charges Now Being Filed.

10. Concurrent with this motion, the State of Vermont is filing a Specification of Charges against Respondent alleging 25 counts of unprofessional conduct, set out in 133 numbered paragraphs. The State's allegations against Respondent include charges of substandard care of patients, the illegal practice of medicine, failure to maintain proper medical records, multiple instances of improper prescribing of controlled substances and other drugs, violations of professional boundaries with patients, breach of patient confidentiality, and the repeated failure on the part of Respondent to abide by material terms of legal agreements.² The allegations also charge Respondent with making false, deceptive, or misleading statements to a Board investigator. An affidavit summarizing the Board's investigation, sworn to by Board investigator Philip J. Ciotti is attached as **Exhibit A** to this motion.

11. In light of the detail and seriousness of the State's allegations and the evidence supporting them, the State now moves to extend the period of summary suspension provided for by the Interim Consent Order signed by the parties in June 2004 and approved by the Board in July 2004. At the time that summary suspension was entered in July, the stipulation and consent order provided that the Board "may enter the finding required under 3 V.S.A. §

2. Because investigation has produced evidence of violations by Respondent of the terms and conditions of her various consent orders with the Vermont Board, the State requests that this matter be captioned to include the docket numbers of the complaints that were the original basis for those compliance agreements, i.e., MPS 61-

814 (c)", i.e., an express Board finding that protection of the public health, safety, and welfare imperatively requires emergency, summary suspension of Respondent's medical license.

12. Since June/July 2004, investigation of Respondent's conduct and of her compliance with her legally-required conditions of licensure has revealed a pervasive pattern of misconduct, disregard for professional medical standards, and indifference to legal obligations by Respondent Taylor. The basis for summary suspension on a continued basis is now even more compelling than at the time of the Board's order in July.

13. Board investigation has identified: (a) multiple instances of conduct by Respondent as a physician that endanger the public health, safety, and welfare; and (b) conduct by Respondent demonstrating her inability or unwillingness to abide by the terms and conditions were imposed upon her medical license to protect patients and the public from risk of harm. In sum, continuation of the period of summary suspension is fully warranted, and the State hereby moves the Board for an order to this effect.

14. The agreement of the parties expressly provides that before or upon expiration of the initial 60-day period of summary suspension the State may file a motion to continue the period of summary suspension during which Respondent is required to desist from the practice of medicine. Thus, the State now moves for extension of the period of summary suspension, pending further proceedings or order in this matter in light of the serious charges that have been filed against Respondent and the compelling nature of the facts set forth in the affidavit of the Board's investigator.

15. The agreement of the parties also expressly provides that Respondent may demand a prompt hearing on the merit of the State's allegations. The State's position is that

continuation of the period of suspension will protect patients and the public, while a hearing before the Board on the merits of the State's allegations will provide Respondent the opportunity to confront in an evidentiary proceeding the charges being filed against her.

WHEREFORE, the State of Vermont moves the Board of Medical Practice for an order extending the period of summary suspension of Respondent Taylor's license to practice medicine pending a hearing on the merits of the State's allegations of unprofessional conduct.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont this 30th day of September 2004.

STATE OF VERMONT

WILLIAM H. SORRELL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

by:


JAMES S. ARISMAN
Assistant Attorney General